



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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Brian Preston, Director

Board Members:

George Davis
Mark Wagner
Jim Pfeiler
Stacy Conforti

MAY 16, 2024 MEETING MINUTES

Dubuque County Conservation Board meeting was called to order by Mark Wagner 4:02 P.M. In person meeting at the Swiss Valley Nature Center with a Zoom link, <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84020947516?pwd=dOoyNldqgrayFacBEarHYPzeHgK80Kw.1>
Meeting ID: 840 2094 7516 Passcode: 905418

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present: Mark Wagner, Jim Pfeiler and Stacy Conforti. Absent: George Davis
Staff Members Present: Brian Preston, Nate Sisler, Addy Schober, Ray Martin and Lisa Schroeder.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to approve the April 18, 2024, meeting minutes was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Isaac Freund, 2525 Willow Brook Dr., Asbury, IA 52002, Troop 51, Bowstring informational panels with a bench on one side of the boarder. Freund plans to ask local business for donations for materials and collect bottles to be turned in at the redemption center and a burger night at the Asbury Eagles Club. Motion to approve Isaac Freund Eagle Scout Project for informational panels at Bowstring Wildlife area was made by Conforti and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

REQUEST BY WUERTZER TO ALLOW ADDITION TO AN EXISTING HOME IN A C-1 CONSERVANCY DISTRICT:

Bruce Wuertzer, 11299 Rock Grove Ct, Dubuque, IA 52001. Wuertzer would like to build a two-car garage on a current gravel parking area next to his existing home. Zoning requests the Conservation Board review the request first and make a recommendation. Preston would recommend approval based on the area is currently gravel and occupied by a temporary shelter. Motion to allow Wuertzer's request on a C-1 Conservancy to build a two-car garage on a current gravel parking area next to his existing home located at 11299 Rock Grove Ct. was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

DUBUQUE AREA TRIATHLON CLUB SPECIAL USE REQUEST:

Heritage Pond, open water swimming on Monday nights from 5:00 – 7:00 PM and Thursday mornings from 6:00 – 8:00 AM, May through September. If approved, they will provide updated insurance. Preston recommended approval; we have had no complaints. Motion to approve Dubuque Area Triathlon Club special use request was made by Conforti and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATIONS:

Iowa Scholastic Mountain Bike League, Proving Grounds, June 29, 2024, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM., youth mountain bike race, 3rd annual event, will need overflow parking. Preston said youth participation is growing and brings a lot of people to the area. Motion to approve the Iowa Scholastic Mountain Bike League special event application was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

Sundown Mountain Resort, Bownanza, August 8th – August 10th, along Heritage Trail. Area used for camping. Preston recommends approval, insurance is required two weeks prior to the event. Motion to approve the Sundown Mountain Resort, Bownanza special event application subject to providing insurance was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

Alzheimer's Association, walk and run on Heritage Trail, August 17, 2024, 5:00 AM – 12:00 PM, staff needed for parking and insurance required two weeks prior to event. Motion to approve the Alzheimer's Association special event application on Heritage Trail subject to providing insurance was made by Conforti and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

St. Vincent DePaul, fundraiser, Heritage Pond & Pavilion, September 28, 2024, 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM, Preston recommended approval, will need insurance two weeks prior to the event. Motion to approve the St. Vincent DePaul special event application for Heritage Trail subject to providing insurance was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

AWARD BID FOR SWISS VALLEY PARK HMA ROAD IMPROVEMENT:

Budgeted for FY 2024 for \$40,000.00. Bids were due by 1:00 PM at the Swiss Valley Nature Center. One bid was dropped off at the Courthouse. The bid documents clearly state where and when the bids needed to be delivered. Bids were opened at 1:00 PM at the Swiss Valley Nature Center. Five bids were opened: Top Grade Excavating Inc. for \$78,411.20, Pirc-Tobin for \$80,650.00, Connolly Construction Inc. for \$63,518.10, McDermott Excavating for \$65,446.00 and Tschiggfrie Excavating for \$86,696.00. Connolly Construction Inc had the low bid at \$63,518.10, which is over budget. Preston will be meeting with the budget director on where we might be able to cut some other cost or projects. Asphalt paving is very important and needs to be taken care of this year. Motion to award the bid for Swiss Valley Park HMA road improvement to Connolly Construction Inc. for \$63,518.10 contingent on Preston meeting with the budget director was made by Conforti and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried.

SET DATE FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON BANKSTON POND AND ADA TRAIL:

WHKS designed the trail plans. Public input was given over Labor Day weekend last year. Preston recommends having a public meeting during the regular June Board Meeting at the Nature Center. Motion to set public hearing on Bankston Pond and ADA Trail for June 20, 2024 at 4:00 PM, Swiss Valley Nature Center was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

AMERICORPS NATIONAL CIVILIAN COMMUNITY CORPS (NCCC) APPLICATION:

Preston requested permission to submit a grant application for NCCC. The grant application is due before June 20th. If awarded the NCCC grant, they would work on ADA accessible signage and walks in our areas. The estimated time frame would be September through October of 2024. Motion to approve Preston submitting the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps application was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None

STAFF REPORTS:

DIRECTOR REPORT: Preston welcomed Ray Martin, Greens Superintendent at Fillmore. A seasonal employee was injured on Wednesday. Working with workman's comp and OSHA. He is doing well and will have surgery on Monday. Last Saturday was the tree distribution at Swiss Valley Park in conjunction with Alliant Energy and the Iowa DNR. We will receive \$1,000 for our participation.

There was a tree planted in the park for the demonstration. FEMA transition, total damages \$55,904.91, reimbursement from FEMA \$41,928.68 and State \$5,590.49 combined 85%, local \$8,385.74. Working with the budget direct that the funds come back to the Conservation Board as Revenue. Little Maquoketa River Mounds met with John Pearson, connection to the Heritage Trail recommend to the State Reserve Board for approval. Tribal council works with state preserve representative on committees. Suggesting using the old HWY 52 alignment. Park Rangers completed firearms training. Two Park Rangers helped as firearm instructors. Planted trees at Bowstring along the stream. Land is in CRP and we are required to maintain the terms. County Conservation Boards are not eligible for CRP payments.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT: Sisler said trees have been planted, cleared trails, added rock at Bowstring, Whitewater, and Ringneck. Amry Corps inspections went well. Volunteer groups along Heritage Trail. Banwarth planted food plots. The sides of Heritage Trail were mowed this week. Bathroom partitions completed at Massey and finishing up Mud Lake. Produced firewood and replaced playground parts.

GREENS SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Martin said spiked greens on Monday. Irrigation problems fixed, very busy and settling into the new position. Cutting greens two to three times a week, adding additional seasonal help, spraying to keep greens regulated. Had a few nice compliments and a couple of complaints about all the tree stumps. Possibly bidding out the stump removal? Preston said Martin has been really working hard.

NATURALIST REPORT: Schober presented environmental highlights for May, 25 programs, 909 participants, 4th grade Outdoor Adventures – Geology will be finished next week. Bat house workshop, migratory bird day hike, Forest School – Bats & Caves, spring wildflower hike and rain barrel workshop. Upcoming programs Kindergarten Outdoor Adventures – Habitats, Older Wiser Livelier Soul (OWLS) – Prairie walk and Birding Hike, Forest School – Discover Our Wetlands.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion to approve the May 2024 payables was made by Pfeiler and seconded by Conforti. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, June 20, 2024, at 4:00 P.M., Swiss Valley Nature Center.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn was made by Conforti and seconded by Pfeiler. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 5:08 P.M.



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBER



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